



Trauma-Informed Care

Understanding Trauma's Role in Fueling Addiction & Chronic Relapse

What is Trauma-Informed Care?

Trauma-Informed Care is a clinical framework that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and integrates that understanding into every aspect of treatment. Rather than asking what is wrong with a person, it asks what happened to them, reshaping how clinicians assess, communicate with, and support individuals in recovery. For chronic relapsers, substance use is frequently rooted in unresolved trauma. This shift in perspective is foundational to lasting change.

How It Works: The Five Principles of Trauma-Informed Care

- 1) Establish Safety**
Create environments where clients feel physically and emotionally secure.
- 2) Build Trustworthiness**
Maintain clear, transparent expectations throughout the treatment process.
- 3) Foster Peer Support**
Use shared experience to reduce isolation and build genuine connection.
- 4) Promote Collaboration**
Engage clients as active participants in their own recovery process.
- 5) Restore Empowerment**
Rebuild the client's sense of control, voice, and personal agency.

Goals of Trauma-Informed Care

- Recognize trauma's role in addiction and relapse cycles
- Build emotional safety within the treatment environment
- Reduce shame and stigma around trauma responses
- Develop healthy regulation strategies for trauma symptoms
- Address underlying wounds driving addictive behavior

Therapeutic Benefits

- Reduced avoidance of difficult emotions and memories
- Improved ability to engage in therapeutic work
- Stronger therapeutic alliance with clinical staff
- Greater emotional regulation under stress
- More sustained engagement in the recovery process

Trauma-Informed Care is Highly Effective For Treating the Following Conditions:

- Substance Use Disorder
- Depression & Anxiety
- Eating Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- PTSD
- Dissociative Disorders

Trauma-Informed Care at Burning Tree Ranch

Most programs incorporate trauma-informed principles in name only, compressing assessment and stabilization into days. For chronic relapsers, genuine TIC requires extended safety, consistent therapeutic relationships, and real time to build the trust that trauma processing demands.

Our **long-term, progress-based model** gives clients months to establish that foundation before deeper trauma work begins. Clients advance when they demonstrate real emotional stabilization, not when a program calendar runs out, which is the only way trauma-informed care can actually deliver on its promise.



“Trauma is one of the leading contributors in our clients relapse history. If it’s addressed too early, it can lead to treatment dropout against staff advice or against medical advice, and it can also lead to further trauma.”

 **Meghan Bohlman, LPC-S, LCDC, EMDR-Trained**
Executive Clinical Director, Burning Tree Ranch



Trauma-Informed Care in a Dual Diagnosis Setting

Trauma-Informed Care is essential in dual-diagnosis treatment because trauma and co-occurring mental health conditions are deeply interconnected. For chronic relapsers, unresolved trauma frequently sustains both the substance use disorder and the co-occurring condition, making integrated, trauma-sensitive treatment a clinical necessity.

At Burning Tree Ranch, we integrate a trauma-informed framework with EMDR, DBT, and individual therapy to create a coordinated dual-diagnosis treatment plan that addresses both trauma history and substance use simultaneously, guiding clients and families toward lasting sobriety.

Dual Diagnosis Defined:

The presence of **both a substance use disorder and a mental health condition** occurring together. Effective treatment for dual-diagnosis addictions must address both aspects simultaneously.



Have Other Treatment Programs Missed the Deeper Issues?

Burning Tree Ranch is the Nation’s only authentic long-term treatment program for chronic relapse. Call us at (866) 287-2877 or visit us online at www.BurningTree.com.

Disclaimer: Burning Tree Ranch aims to enhance the quality of life for individuals battling substance use and mental health disorders through well-researched and professionally reviewed content. Our publications focus on the nature of behavioral health conditions, available treatments, and their outcomes. Reviewed by licensed experts, our material is informative but not a replacement for professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the guidance of a licensed health provider for any medical or clinical concerns.